City of Lafayette
City Council Special Meeting
Redevelopment Agency Special Meeting
ACTION MINUTES

Stanley Middle School
3455 School Street, Lafayette, California

May 9, 2009
9:00 am

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Tatzin called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Members: Mayor Tatzin, Vice Mayor Andersson, Councilmembers Anderson, Anduri, Federighi

Absent: Council Members: None

Staff: Steven Falk, City Manager; Ann Merideth, Community Development Director; Niroop Srivatsa, Planning & Building Services Manager; Joanne Robbins, City Clerk

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Council agreed to the agenda.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ruth McCahan spoke on the senior needs assessment and phone survey.

5. OLD BUSINESS

Continued consideration of the Draft Lafayette Downtown Strategy and Specific Plan.

Mayor Tatzin made opening remarks, and turned the meeting over to Councilmember Anderson as the Chair of the Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee.

Next Steps

Community Development Director Merideth presented the proposed next steps in the process for the Plan and EIR.

Public comments on next steps: Geoff Bellenger, Mary Anne Hoisington, Victoria Avenue resident, Eliot Hudson, Ruth McCahan, Monroe Avenue resident, Guy Atwood, Marie Blits, Don Lively, Tom Whitten, Carol Singer, Byrne Mathisen, Maeve Pessis, George Burtt, Bobbie Frietas, Susan Callister, Peter Clark.

The Council discussed the next steps, and agreed to the following:

- Staff will prepare the Revised Draft Plan with technical support from the consultants.
- Revise the work plan and schedule to include the following:
  - Meetings by Planning Commission and Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee to review the Revised Draft Plan when it is released and before the Commission's EIR scoping meeting
  - Development of EIR alternatives by the Planning Commission with review by the City Council
  - A new meeting by City Council to (1) receive comments from the Planning Commission and Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee on the Revised Draft Plan before the Commission's EIR scoping meeting and (2) discuss the Plan's revised economic analysis
- Incorporate findings of the senior needs assessment in the Revised Draft Plan.
- Prepare a summary of the Revised Draft Plan for the public.

Major Issues

Public comments on major issues: Bobbie Frietas, Geoff Bellenger, Tom Whitten, Susan Callister

The Council added the following to issues to be discussed either as part of or after the major issues: gas station, eminent domain, new streets, East End streetscapes, loss of parking, significant and historic structures, publicity on Plan, aggregation of lots.

Before beginning its consideration of the major issues, the Council discussed follow-up items to the April 13 joint meeting.

Redevelopment Funds

City Manager Falk gave a report, and Council discussed future redevelopment funds.

Public comments on redevelopment funds: Guy Atwood, Bobbie Frietas, Susan Callister, Gabriel Froymovich

Deregulation of Standards and Property Values

The Council discussed this issue with staff.

Public comments on deregulation: Mark Mitchell, Monroe Avenue resident, Lynn Hiden

Area around the New Library

The Council discussed this issue with staff.

Public comments on area around Library: Byrne Mathisen, Joan Bruzzone, Victoria Avenue resident, Geoff Bellenger, Monroe Avenue resident, Sal Lombardo, Maeve Pessis, Kathy Merchant, Lynn Hiden, Gabriel Froymovich

The Council discussed this issue, and agreed to revise the Draft Plan to provide more details about the Golden Gate Way, including addressing the following:

- Transition between the Golden Gate Way area and the residential area south of the creek
- Creek and proposed park as assets to the area
- Role of eminent domain
- Height north and south of Mount Diablo
- Circulation around the Library, particularly for children using the proposed park, school children, and seniors; consideration of alternative street/pavement treatments to manage circulation issues
- Synergies between uses, such as senior housing
- Define the district better and what we want to see in the district
- What are the incentives to get what we want

Vision Statement

Community Development Director Merideth presented the staff recommendation.

Public comments on vision statement: Carol Singer, Eliot Hudson, Ann Denny, Carol Lane resident, Lynn Hiden

The Council discussed the issue, and agreed to revise the Draft Plan as follows:

- Revise the overall Vision Statement to read:

  Create a downtown with small town character and sustainable quality of life that includes a central core, pedestrian relationships between services, and is a place where residents can congregate, shop, enjoy cultural activities, conduct their civic affairs, and savor the beauty and ambience of a small town.

  Encourage the evolution of a distinctive Lafayette character that is informal with variations in architectural styles, massing and setbacks while maintaining public sight lines to surrounding hills and maximizing the enjoyment of its natural environment.

Reinforce Downtown as the city's center for business, civic and cultural activities with land use, circulation and design policies that retain the focus of the downtown as a retail center and multifamily residential neighborhood.

Encourage economic activity beneficial to the community and support, enhance and maintain the community.

- Revise as necessary the chapters' vision statements, goals, policies and actions to be consistent with the overall vision statement.

There was a lunch break from 12:00 – 12:45 pm.

Districts

Community Development Director Merideth presented the staff recommendation.

Public comments on districts: Joan Bruzzone, Karen Maggio, Maeve Pessis, Carol Singer, Guy Atwood, Lynn Hiden, Monroe Avenue resident, Marie Blits, George Burtt, Erling Horn for Jeanne Ateljevich, Lynn Hiden, Bobbie Frietas, Geoff Bellenger, Guy Atwood, Gabriel Froymovich, Mary-Jane Wood

The Council discussed the issue, and agreed to revise the Draft Plan as follows:

- Retain the districts until the more information is provided in the Revised Draft Plan about possible General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments, including what types of uses would be allowed and what would become non-conforming.

- Rewrite the descriptions of each District to better explain the existing characteristics and proposed vision that will guide future development and redevelopment activities.

- Include a policy to prepare commercial design guidelines, including mixed use, based on the character of each District.

- Include a policy to prepare multifamily guidelines based on the character of each District.

- Address where ground floors would be limited to retail only.

- Include that residential uses will still be allowed throughout the downtown.

- Include that residential uses will still be allowed on the vacant property at the corner of Moraga Road and St. Mary's Road.

- Include more about the feasible reuse of the Park Theater for a theater and other uses.

- Define the "Downtown Core" as the Downtown Retail District and Downtown Civic and Cultural District.

- Revise the Districts as shown in the Draft Plan as follows:

  - West End:
    - Delete the area south of Mosswood from the planning area.
    - Remove the residential areas south of Mount Diablo (around West Road), and create an annex to the Downtown Residential District: Downtown Residential District West.

  - Downtown Retail:
    - Extend the eastern boundary to First Street north of Mount Diablo Blvd.
    - Move the western boundary north of Mount Diablo Blvd. to the east property line of the "white office buildings".
    - Move the western boundary south of Mount Diablo Blvd. to the west property line of Diamond K

  - Downtown Residential: See Downtown Civic and Cultural.

  - Downtown Civic and Cultural:
    - Expand the southern boundary to include properties on the west and east sides of Moraga Road that are developed with offices uses or are vacant.
    - Expand the eastern boundary to include Lafayette Elementary School.

  - Funky Town: Change the name to Brown Avenue.

  - East End: No change.

  - Gateway: No change.

Height and Density

Community Development Director Merideth presented the staff recommendation. Planning & Building Services Manager Srivatsa explained density bonuses and State law.

Public comments on height and density: Gabriel Froymovich, Eliot Hudson, Ann Denny, Guy Atwood, Lynn Hiden, Monroe Avenue resident, Ned Robinson, Byrne Mathisen, Erling Horn, Geoff bellenger, George Burtt, Marie Blits, Bobbie Frietas, Maeve Pessis, Ruth McCahan.

The Council began its discussion about height and density. It asked staff to provide the following information:

- Effect of reducing the maximum height of 35 feet to 25 feet, including would this be considered "downzoning".

- How would reducing the maximum height of 35 feet to 25 feet affect the revised Housing Element now being considered by the State.

The Council agreed to schedule two more meetings to complete its review. Mayor Tatzin asked Council Members to bring their calendars to the May 11 meeting and for staff to poll Council Members before the meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The Council / Agency Board adjourned the meeting at 4:55 pm to the regular meeting on May 11, 2009.

APPROVED:

Don Tatzin

Don Tatzin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Joanne Robbins

Joanne Robbins, City Clerk